

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 and 7-14 are now pending in the application. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 6; claim 6 has been cancelled and claim 7 has been amended accordingly. Claims 2, 4, and 11 have been amended to correct minor typographical errors. Withdrawal of claims 15-28 as a result of a restriction requirement has been made ~~final~~; those claims are now cancelled. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the remarks contained herein.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Rokowski et al.

Claims 1-4, 9, 11, and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Rokowski et al., U.S. Patent 5,534,310. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Rokowski patent teaches that its polymers bearing acetoacetyl functional pendant moieties must be treated with excess ammonia or primary amine to form its required enamine functional pendant moieties. Column 3, lines 41-44. The Rokowski patent specified that its carrier is maintained at a pH of 8.5 to 9.5. Column 2, lines 5-14.

The Rokowski patent thus does not disclose maintaining a pH of not higher than 7.

Because the Rokowski patent fails to teach or disclose all aspects of the claimed invention, Applicants submit that the claims are patentable over the cited Rokowski patent and request reconsideration and allowance of the claims.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Rokowski et al.

Claims 5-8, 10, 12, and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Rokowski et al., U.S. Patent 5,534,310. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, the Rokowski patent does not disclose maintaining a pH ~~of not~~ higher than 7. Further, rather than suggesting the present invention in which the pH is not ~~higher~~ than 7, the Rokowski patent teaches away from it by teaching that its compositions ~~must be~~ maintained at a pH of 8.5 to 9.5. It is well-settled law that teaching away from is the antithesis of obviousness; therefore, the present claims are not suggested by the Rokowski ~~patent~~ disclosure.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the claims are patentable over the cited Rokowski patent and request reconsideration and allowance of the claims.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully ask the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600 or

directly at (248) 641-1220.

Respectfully submitted,

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